

The Merchandise of False Teachers, 2 Pet 2:3; Those without Truth Buy Their “Magic Elixir”; Those with It Do Not Judge but Discern, 2 Tim 2:23-26

1. In the Greek the word carries a similar meaning but places emphasis on those who travel around to sell merchandise and, in Peter’s context, will use any ruse to convince people to buy their inferior products.
2. Peter compares false teachers with traveling salesmen who huckster people into buying snake oil while presenting it as a magic elixir.
3. Such is the product sold by false teachers, whether they are preachers, teachers, or politicians. Among those who are campaigning for our nation’s highest office, none would escape Peter’s denunciations.
4. However, each would qualify as a traveling salesman or -woman, who goes from place to place and with deceptive speech sells his inferior merchandise as a magic elixir that will cure the ills of the world.
5. The same can be said of many who mount pulpits across the country and, so as not to offend, delude their congregations with false teachings. The hidden agenda is to increase membership but doing so at the expense of sound doctrine.
6. The majority of teachers across this country, most of them unwittingly, are communicating destructive lies to innocent schoolchildren, a circumstance that on a daily basis continues the advance of the long march through the institutions.
7. What then should be the believer’s response to the disinformation of the day and those who utilize the method to peddle their destructive ideologies?
8. Our first obligation is to know the truth so we can discern the lie.
9. Our attitude should be objective, realizing that in an open society people are free to believe whatever they wish. The Invisible War is waged on the premise that free will allows each person the privilege of choice: to believe the truth or accept the lie.
10. Those who believe the lie will always be among us and outnumber those who believe the truth. Our objective is not to defeat them but to guide a few to the truth.
11. Our duty is also not to be critical of individuals but of the lie they believe. The believer must defend the truth but do so by living it without compromise. This is done by using the same free-will choices as those who believe the lie.
12. Most ideologues have an insatiable desire to impose their merchandise on everyone because they arrogantly believe their magic elixir is best for everyone and especially for the benighted whom they wish to bring to heel.
13. The confidence the advanced believer has in his relationship with God and his superior knowledge of truth provides for him courage toward adversaries, toward life, and toward circumstances.
14. There is no need to get involved in judging our adversaries. Christ is delegated the authority to do that. Our duty is to discern the thinking and the speech of our adversaries and to reject them both.

15. Consequently, the Word gives us precise instruction regarding these things in:

2 Timothy 2:23 - Avoid foolish and ignorant controversies knowing they foment needless battles.

v. 24 - The servant of the Lord must not be belligerent, but must be kind toward all in the congregation, apt to teach, and patient,

2 Timothy 2:25 - correcting with grace those who in opposition need discipline so that perhaps God will give them a change of mind for the purpose of advancement in knowledge of the truth,

v. 26 - and that they may come to their senses and be delivered out from the devil's trap of reversionism, having been held captive by him to execute his plan.

16. In our passage of Colossian 2:8, we have arrived at the following corrected translation for as far as we have gone:

Colossians 2:8 - Continuously be alert that there should not be anyone carrying you off as prisoners of war through the agency of anthropocentric academic speculation and deception without content [**disinformation**] ...